

# Teacher Challenge

Connecting teachers through free professional learning



- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Need Help?](#)
- [Challenges](#)
- [Why Blog](#)
- [Get A Blog!](#)
- [Discussions](#)

[RSS Feed](#)

## Why Blog

The Teacher Challenge involves free 30 day professional development challenges where participants are stepped through weekly tasks.

3  
tweets

While many of the 30 Day Challenges won't be related to blogging, participants will use blogs to reflect on their progress in the Challenges.

retweet

We've found that educators who develop blogging skills expanded them quickly to encompass a wide range of web 2.0 technologies.

The purpose of this page is to provide background information on what is a blog and why blog for those new to blogging.

We've also include an anatomy of a blog and blogging vocabulary with links to helpful resources — the idea is for you to use this information as quick reference guides.

The best thing about the teacher challenges, is that you'll have a huge support network every step of the way!

### What is a Blog?

The term blog originated from the blend of the term "web log".

Nowadays blogs compete with mainstream media in delivering news and information. Important events, war coverage and celebrity deaths are often reported quicker and more accurately on blogs and Twitter than traditional news service.

Why? Because any one can easily set up their own blog and share their thoughts (known as their voice) online.

Blogs are written on just about any subject and for a wide range of purposes, including personal, business, work and sharing news stories.

### Reasons why educators blog include:



## Examples of educational blogs:

Here's some examples of educational blogs to check out:

1. **Teachers Personal blogs:**
  - o [Free Technology for Teachers](#)
  - o [Larry Ferlazzo's Websites Of The Day](#)
  - o [Langwitches](#)
  - o [Integrating Technology in the Primary Classroom](#)
2. **Class blogs:**
  - o [2KM@ Leopold Primary School](#)
  - o [Blog, Blog Blog Blog, Blog Some More](#)
  - o [Mr. Salsich's Class](#)
  - o [Mrs. Yollis' Class Blog!](#)
  - o [The Ins and Outs](#)
3. **Student blogs:**
  - o [Rhiannon's Blog](#) – Grade 2
  - o [Millie's Marvellous Blog](#) – Grade 2
  - o [BB's awesome blog](#) – Grade 2
  - o [Grace's Blog](#) – Grade 7
  - o [Chemistry: It's "Element"-ary!!](#) – Grade 10
4. **Other useful sites**
  - o [The Edublog Awards website](#)
  - o [International Edublogs Directory](#)
  - o [Education blogs listed on PostRank](#)

## The Basic Structure of a Blog

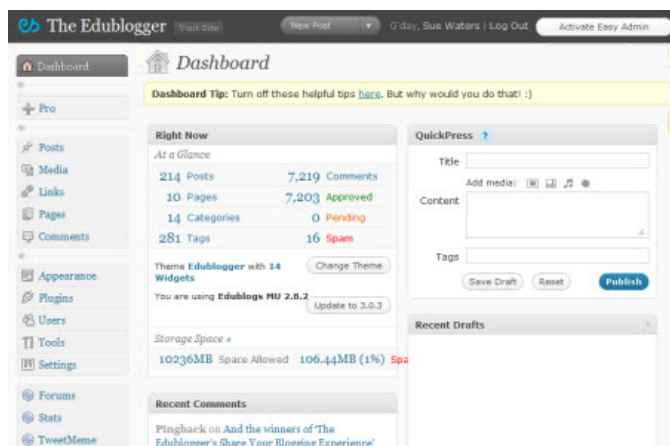
Blogs are normally made up of the following main elements:

### 1. Dashboard

This is the back-end area of your blog where you make changes and edits. This area is only accessible to logged in blog administrators, editors, authors, contributors or subscribers.

Here's where you'll find more information on:

1. [Logging into your blog](#)
2. [Using your blog dashboard](#)



## 2. Theme

Usually one of the first things bloggers do is pick out a theme. This is the template or look of the blog that people see when they visit your blog.

This is what gives it your personal touch.

Here's where you'll find more information on:

- [Changing your blog look](#)
- [What to consider when choosing your blog theme](#)
- [Changing your blog's theme](#)



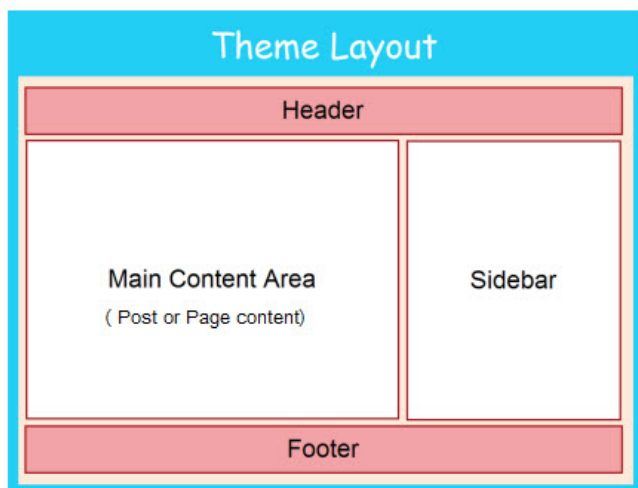
## 3. Theme layout

Blog themes normally include a header, a content area (for your posts), sidebar area (for your widgets) and come in several standard layouts:

- **Single column** with no sidebar (widgets are located at the bottom of the blog)
- **Two Column** – normally a wide column for content and narrower sidebar
- **Three Column** – with sidebars side-by-side on one side of the blog or either side of the wider content column
- **Four Column** – one content column and three sidebars. The content column is often the same width as the other columns. This type of layout tends to be cluttered looking and less suited to reading lengthy content.

Here's where you'll find more information on:

- [What to consider when choosing your blog theme](#)
- [The 137 Edublogs Themes Separated Into Categories To Make Choosing Your Next Theme Easier](#)



## 4. Header

The header is the area at the top of a blog where the blog title, graphics, and possibly navigational links

appear.

Using your own custom image header means you can obtain a much more customized look and feel adding your “own personal touch” to your blog.

Here’s where you’ll find more information on:

- [Uploading your custom image header](#)



## 5. Posts

Posts are where you normally publish the latest update or new article on a blog. They are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order with the most recent post at the top of the page.

Most of the content published on a blog is normally written as Posts. E.g, information on what’s happening in your classroom, assignment instructions, homework and discussion topics are normally published as Posts and not on Pages.

Blogs are designed to have only one Post page which normally displays on the homepage of the blog. Check out [The Edublogger](#) to see how posts are displayed in reverse chronological order on the [home page](#).

Here’s where you’ll find more information on:

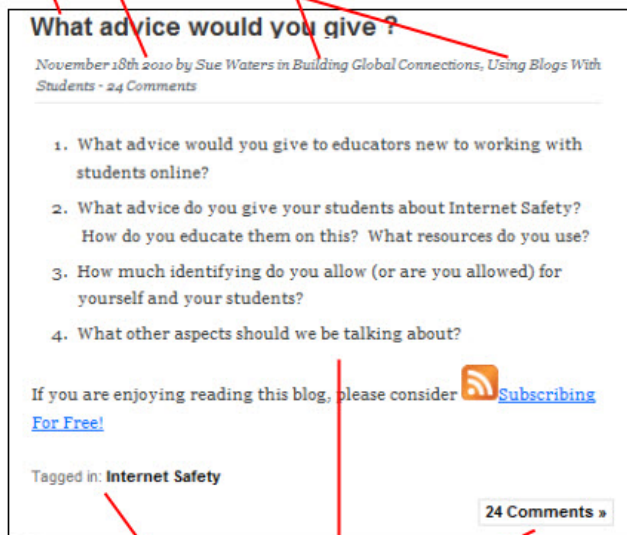
- [The Differences between Pages and Posts](#)
- [Writing your first post](#)
- [Adding Categories and Tags into your Posts](#)
- [Editing Posts](#)

## Main Features of a Post

### 1. Title

### 2. Date posted

### 3. Categories



### 6. Tags

### 4. Comments

### 5. Content - the info you want to share

## 6. Comments

Posts commonly allow readers to publish comments on the posts they read. This is where the reader can share their thoughts, connect with the blogger and interact with other readers.

Here’s where you’ll find more information on:

- [Engaging Readers through comments](#)
- [Controlling who can comment on posts](#)
- [Managing, editing and approving comments](#)
- [Enabling threaded comments](#)
- [Writing links in Comments](#)

**1** Click on Post heading or Comment link

**2** Scroll down to comment box

**3** Add name and email, antispam word, comment and then click Submit Comment

LEAVE A RESPONSE

Name \*

Email \*

Website

Anti-spam word: (Required) \*

To prove you're a person (not a spam script), type the security word shown in the picture.

bianxoy56

Your response:

Submit Comment

## 7. Pages

You normally use pages for information that you want to share with your readers but don't expect to update frequently. Not all blogging software includes the ability to add Pages.

The most common type of page you'll find on a blog is an About Page.

Here's where you'll find more information on:

- [The Differences between Pages and Posts](#)
- [What is An About Page](#)

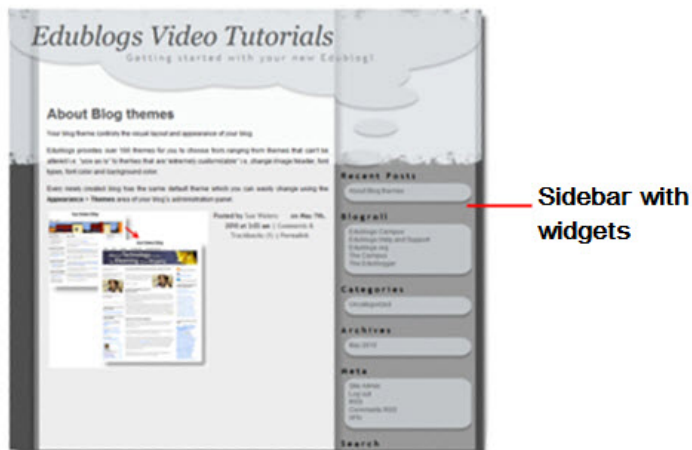
### Example of an About Page



## 8. Sidebar

The location and even existence of sidebars depend on your theme. Some themes even have 3 or more sidebars. You can add and rearrange widgets in your sidebars using your blog dashboard.

The most common theme layout are two columns with one sidebar and one content area.



## 9. Widget

These are the blocks that make up sidebars. Popular widgets include the ability to subscribe to a blog, user statistics, and suggested links.

Here's where you'll find more information on:

- [Changing your sidebar widgets](#)
- [Top widgets for the sidebar of your class or student blog](#)



## 10. RSS

RSS is an acronym which stands for Really Simple Syndication.

In simple terms, RSS is a simple and effective way of keeping in touch when new information is added to a website without having to visit the website to check for new updates.

How it works is you subscribe to your favorite website using the RSS feed in a RSS feed reader such as [Google Reader](#). Whenever new information is added to the website it is automatically sent to your RSS feed reader where you can read it at your convenience.

For example, whenever your favorite blogger publishes a new post it is automatically sent to your Feed reader.



Sites with RSS feeds are normally indicated with the word RSS and/or the orange RSS icon.






#### For more information:

1. Watch [RSS in Plain English](#)
2. Follow these [instructions to subscribe to blogs using Google Reader](#) — just replace the student blogs with your favorite blogs and news services

#### Please note :


- Blogs on all standard blogging platforms automatically include RSS feeds and don't necessarily use words or an icon to indicate the presence of the RSS feed. For all Edublogs, the rss feed is found by going to [yourblog.edublogs.org/feed](http://yourblog.edublogs.org/feed).
- RSS lets you do lots of cool stuff including adding latest updates from your favorite blog(s) or news website(s) to your own site using RSS widgets like [FeedWind's RSS widget](#)

#### 5 Comments Already

1.  **Heather Temske** says:  
[January 3, 2011 at 7:59 am](#)


I'm very excited about the challenge. I set up a blog at the beginning of the school year and I haven't done anything with it. This is just what I need.

[Reply](#)

2.  **Louise Leyden** says:  
[January 4, 2011 at 7:48 am](#)


This may be a dumb question, but should I set up a blog prior to doing the challenge? I am still waiting for my school to okay the funding of a blog (Using Pro option), but I could do a trial at this stage with the free blogging option.

[Reply](#)

- o  **Miss W.** says:  
[January 4, 2011 at 3:34 pm](#)

Hi Louise,  
Will be good to start with the free as a personal blog then use the pro version for a class blog back at school.

[Reply](#)

3.  **Reba Gordon Matthews** says:  
[January 6, 2011 at 7:01 am](#)